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ON PAGE A-1

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Brown Sees Pact To Curtail Arms Verifiable by '80

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WASHINGTON, April 17 — Defense Secretary Harold Brown said today that it would take the United States about a year to regain the ability "to verify adequately" Soviet compliance with a new strategic arms limitation treaty.

American ability to monitor an accord has been weakened because of the loss of two listening posts in Iran. In the Administration's most detailed comment to date on the verification question, Mr. Brown contended that it would also take the Russians a "period of years" to complete tests on any new missile systems that might violate the pact.

Year to Verify Adequately

In effect, Mr. Brown said that while it would take a year or so to regain the ability to verify adequately that the Soviet Union was living up to the treaty, the Russians would need more time than that to violate the accord.

His statement was issued as a result of doubts raised by Senate critics who received a briefing last week from Adm. Stansfield Turner, the Director of Central Intelligence. It was reported today that Admiral Turner had said it would take until 1984 to restore the full intelligence-gathering facilities lost in Iran.

One of the critics of an arms pact, Senator Jake Garn, Republican of Utah, said: "There is nothing the United States can do in either the near or long term to compensate for the loss of electronic listening posts in Iran, making verification of a new SALT treaty, an impossible task. For the foreseeable future, there is no replacement."

Generally agreeing with Admiral Turn-

er, Defense Secretary Brown said that the recovery of the full intelligence-gathering capacity "will take until 1983 or 1984, depending on how much we are able to accelerate programs already under way." But he made a distinction between regaining the full intelligence capability and regaining enough to verify the arms treaty.

"Regaining enough of it to verify adequately Soviet compliance with the provisions of SALT II, I estimate, will take about a year, again depending on how fast we can carry out monitoring programs under development," he said.

Mr. Brown suggested that the year-long gap would not be decisive because the principal problem would be to define the characteristics of new or modified Soviet missiles to insure that the Russians were not developing more than the one new land-based missile system expected to be allowed under the projected treaty.

Each test program will require about 20 flights over a period of years, he said. Thus, while existing systems or replacements for the Iranian monitoring sites might miss some test flights, the total assessment of Soviet compliance would be made from the whole test program, from a variety of sources.

Earlier, a State Department spokesman, Thomas Reston, said that despite Admiral Turner's statement, it would be possible to have a verified accord.

"Nothing Admiral Turner said contravenes the basic judgment of this Administration that the terms of the treaty will be adequately verifiable," the spokesman said. "The President would not sign an agreement unless he was firmly convinced that it is adequately verifiable."

Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance returns to Washington tomorrow after an Easter holiday in Florida and is expected to meet again soon with Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin of the Soviet Union to see whether the remaining handful of issues could be concluded in the next week or so. That could open the way to a meeting between President Carter and Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader, in Geneva by the end of next month.

Text of Brown's Statement

The Iranian monitoring sites supplied us with various kinds of information on Soviet strategic missile programs, much of it connected with features that will be limited by the provisions of a SALT II treaty. Regaining all of this monitoring capability (with or without a SALT II agreement), will take until 1983 or 1984, depending on how much we are able to accelerate programs already under way. Regaining enough of it to verify adequately Soviet compliance with the provisions of SALT II, I estimate, will take about a year, again depending on how fast we can carry out monitoring programs under development.

The principal information at issue is the nature and characteristics of new or modified Soviet ICBM's. Each such Soviet program will require about 20 flight tests over a period of years. Though existing monitoring systems or replacements for the Iranian sites could well miss some flights and might miss some data from some flights that they see, our assessment of compliance would be made from the information we would collect over the whole test program for each missile from a variety of monitoring systems. We expect to conclude a treaty that resolves satisfactorily the remaining provisions on verification and on new ICBM's. In that event, it is my judgment that our monitoring will be such as to provide adequate verification as to Soviet compliance with the curbs on new or modified ICBM's.